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The Church School Teacher

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Keeping Christ in Christmas

By THE EDITOR

Reprint from December 1939

OF COURSE we can not spell Christmas without keeping Christ in it. And yet He is all but forgotten by millions of people who celebrate the day that is in memory of His birth. The atmosphere of Christmas has grown thick and heavy with interests that have a way of hiding Him from our sight. Even our Christian homes are in danger of pushing Him into the background and of remembering Him last as well as least.

Much of the misuse of Christmas is due to a lack of proper sense of values. Trivial and comparatively unimportant things have a way of occupying the chief places. So it is well to look at them with a judicious eye and try to put each where it belongs.

I

First of all, there is Santa Claus. With small children the thought of Saint Nick often interferes with celebrating Christmas in a Christian way. They hear about him from all sides, and are often reminded that if they behave well he will reward them accordingly. And they see him on all sides, too: in books and newspapers, in the stores and on the streets, in season and out of season. Though commercialization and buffoonery have dragged him about in rags and tatters, yet to the imaginative minds of little children it is easy for jolly old Santa to be a living reality while the coming of the Christ child is a rather unimportant happening of long ago, indistinctly re-

membered and but vaguely understood.

Is it any wonder, then, that many earnest Christians feel very resentful toward Santa Claus, and are doing all that they can to get rid of him? They feel that since he is a rival of Christ, he must be put out of the way.

But the real Santa Claus was no rival of Christ. Instead, he was a good servant of His. And from him we have something to learn. The custom of associating Santa Claus with Christmas was brought to America by the early Dutch colonists. "Santa Claus" is an American corruption of the Dutch "Sant Nikolaas," or "Saint Nicholas." Back in the fourth century there was a bishop of Myra, named Nicholas, who was the special friend of children, scholars, and servants. Tradition says that it was his custom, on Christmas Day and of love for the Christ child, to give presents to little children and other friends. There is also a legend of his secret giving of dowries to the three daughters of an impoverished citizen who, unable to procure fit marriages for them, was on the point of giving them up to a life of shame when Nicholas came to his rescue. So the custom grew up, especially among the Dutch, of giving presents in secret

on December 6, the anniversary of the death of Saint Nicholas. Later, the custom was transferred to Christmas Eve, although in Holland they still celebrate Saint Nicholas Day on December 6, by giving and receiving presents, and reserve the Christmas season entirely for celebrating the coming of the Christ child.

By making use of this historic background it is possible to treat old Saint Nick as a friend of Christ rather than as an enemy. There is a way of keeping the dear old fellow, just so we understand him. If our children learn of him as the kindly man who delighted to give presents to children because he wanted them to know about the best Friend children ever had, then Santa may add to, rather than detract from, the definitely Christian celebration of the Nativity.

II

A second problem is that which arises out of the concern of children in getting rather than in giving.

Very few children can go through a Christmas season without an enlargement of their spirit of selfishness. But adults are chiefly to blame for this. Perhaps for weeks before the great day arrives, they will make conversation about

what may be expected for Christmas, always emphasizing what is to be received, but seldom if ever speaking of what is to be given. There is much need in the world, especially after this devastating war, and we do our children a disservice if we hide this fact from them. Some children can give out of their savings, and all of them, if started early enough, can make simple gifts with their own hands. Such giving is of much greater value in forming attitudes and in directing experience in a Christian way than that which comes from teasing for the money and then going to the store to do the shopping.

In this connection a question may be raised about gifts to children in the Sunday school. Is not there some danger in giving the children the impression that the church owes them something by way of candy and other gifts in return for attendance at Sunday school? Would not experience in making some sacrifice for Christmas cheer be more in keeping with the spirit of the gospel? And would it not be more appropriate for the child to give the teacher a present than to expect one from the teacher? Of course, if the children need their candy, and have no other way of getting it, then questions

like these are doubtless out of order, for nobody wants to be "taking candy from the kids."

III

A third factor that often destroys the spirit of Christmas is the general excitement connected with the keeping of Christmas. There is danger lest feasting and celebrating take the place of worship and adoration. The hubbub connected with the preparation for the dinner, the arrival of relatives, and the giving of presents is in no small way responsible for crowding out Christ.

It is evident, then, that if our boys and girls, and our adults, too, are to experience the presence of Christ on Christmas Day, we must all make room for His coming. Our plans must include some quiet moments in the home when the old Christmas story shall be read from one of the Gospels, hymns shall be sung, and prayers shall be offered. Let each home prepare to receive anew Him who is and ever should be the center of every Christmas celebration. Let all recognize the problems, face the difficulties, and work together in overcoming them. For Christ is at the door, and there is danger lest carelessness as well as hardness of heart shall keep Him out.

Help Wanted

By CECELIA ANDERSON

IS THAT your cry? Looking through the want-ad section of the daily newspaper, we are inclined to believe that industry needs help badly—column after column is filled with “help wanted” advertisements. But that is not the kind of “help wanted” we wish to talk about. As a church school teacher, are not the times many that you have come to the “end of your rope”? You struggle with the lesson. When you present it to the class, it falls flat—at least there seems to be no response on the part of the pupils. At the end of the class period when you evaluate the day’s teaching, you comment, “Well, I just didn’t have another thing to give! But where can I turn for help?”

Your situation is no different from mine. We *do* need help. But where? Resources—that is the *help* which we want to discuss.

Books. Books are our constant friends. There are four or five books to which the church school teacher can turn constantly for aid. First among these is the Bible. Not only is the Bible a book of knowl-

edge, but it is a book of inspiration. When in depths of despondency and discouragement, it can lift us to heights of joy and expectancy. The Book reveals the personality of Jesus, the Master Teacher to whom we can turn for supreme aid, not alone for inspiration, but also for concrete knowledge about teaching. It would be well for us as teachers to measure our teaching, not once, but periodically, according to the standards set by Jesus.

A Bible Concordance is a guide book for finding specific information in the Bible. One can buy editions of the Bible complete with a concordance, but if your copy does not have one, you will want to own a good one-volume concordance. Cruden’s one-volume Concordance to the Holy Scripture is adequate for the teacher’s needs. The price of this book is \$2.00.

Next to a concordance, we list a Bible commentary as an essential. Such a book “comments” on words, customs, and practices peculiar to Biblical days. It gives much background to the Bible and

increases our appreciation of it. In this book-help, another one-volume book is recommended: Dummelow's Commentary. Price \$2.50.

"Noah Webster says"—yes, Webster's Dictionary is a must for any teacher. Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 5th Edition, is a good desk copy. You will also find a good Bible dictionary is invaluable in preparing your work. It contains words of antiquity; it gives the history and meaning of words peculiar to Biblical language. A Dictionary of the Bible by Davis can be recommended. Price \$3.50.

A Bible Atlas is a book no teacher can afford to be without. Through its pages we travel through the Holy Land and become acquainted with life in that far-away country. A recent reliable atlas is the Westminster Historical Atlas by Wright and Filson. Price \$3.50.

How can we teach without knowing something about the nature of children? We need to have ready access to a general book on child psychology. Understanding Children by Sherill is written for the Christian teacher. It will not fail to develop new insights in teacher-pupil relations. The price of this book is \$1.25.

If we church school teachers find it possible to own a few basic

books for our work, the types of books mentioned are "musts." For they are the books to which we can constantly go for help—books which will be used in the preparation of almost every lesson. Outside of the Bible and Webster's Dictionary, five basic books can be had for approximately \$12.50. This is not a very large sum of money, and over a period of three or four years, adding one book a year, any teacher can have a very fine church school teacher's bookshelf.

Of course, the church school should have these books in its library and make them accessible to all teachers. In addition to the books recommended for the individual teacher, there might be added a set of encyclopedias and books on specific subjects such as Symbolism, Church History, Worship, and Music. If your church school does not have a library, why not start one this year?

Current magazines, church periodicals, and daily newspapers. Perhaps we have overlooked the possibilities of these humble but well-known friends as resources for the Christian teacher. Through them we can keep in touch with current events—everyday happenings in the busy stream of life. Take the daily newspaper, for ex-

ample; it may contain the very news story which will introduce your next Sunday's lesson. Everyday happenings are *real* to all of us.

A secular periodical which is a source of interesting up-to-date information on Bible geography is the *National Geographic Magazine*. This magazine is well illustrated with colorful pictures. And in speaking of pictorial material, other current magazines also contain a wealth of material which can be adapted to Christian teaching. The pictures can be clipped, mounted, and filed for permanent use.

A picture file for the church school can be built gradually and inexpensively. Good pictures of Bible stories and scenes can be purchased for a small amount from Art companies. Other pictures can be collected from sources such as primary leaflets and Sunday school papers. Many churches are now starting libraries of projected pictures, especially in slides and film strips. If the church does not own a projector for showing slides and film strips, they can be rented for a small amount, or perhaps several churches will pool their resources and own one together.

Thus far we have mentioned inanimate helpers. But in speaking

of resources we must also mention *persons*. A resource person may be someone you will find within your own church or community, or it may be someone from the "outside" who contributes to your work. Staff members employed by the Board of Parish Education of your denomination are your servants. They are always willing to aid you and a very practical way of making use of their help is through correspondence.

But there are resource people very close to you, if you will but discover them. Perhaps there is a public school teacher who can give you pertinent suggestions regarding educational methods. Through a conversation with one of these experienced friends we may find help. Then I am thinking of the kind of resource person one Sunday school teacher called in to help her. She was teaching a unit on church music, a subject which she herself knew very little about. But Mrs. A—— in the congregation taught music in the public schools, and she also had a fine knowledge and appreciation concerning church music. The bewildered church school teacher enlisted Mrs. A's help, and together they went over the unit for the quarter. Mrs. A—— visited the class on a couple of occasions, and contributed to the

class discussion, on another occasion she accompanied them on their visit to the church sanctuary and she played for them on the organ some of the hymns they had studied about.

Help wanted? Very close at hand we have the help we are seek-

ing, if we will but use it. Through the many resources mentioned, as well as other which you will discover for yourself, your background and appreciation of the subject which you are teaching in the church school can be enriched a hundredfold.

How Well Is the Bible Known by Youth Today?

By JOHN F. PALM

ONE WRITER has this to say on the subject of religious education:

"Yesterday God was central in all education. The public school was a spiritual-minded institution. Today the public school is secular minded. Then every boy and girl in public school received religious education in the schoolrooms of the state. Now no one receives it there.

"A nation can not long continue half religious and half irreligious. If one half of our population has become spiritually illiterate and paganized within a single century, how long will it take for America to be totally paganized?"

It is worth our while to give a little attention to the implications of such statements as this!

The Supreme Court of the United States answering the case of the Free Thinkers of America who sought to prevent the Bible from being read in the public schools, spoke as follows: "When a principal or teacher reads a Bible passage without comment, he does not violate either the State or Federal Constitutions." This same justice, referring to a previous ruling stated: "It would be a travesty on our constitutional guarantees of liberty and conscience to inquire into the sectarianism of those seek-

ing access to public school buildings. With whatever emphasis repetition can lend, the court emphasizes his statement: 'Liberty for non-believers in God, but denied to believers in a Supreme Deity would be mock liberty!' " The Supreme Court in the *Holy Trinity Church* case said: "The Declaration of Independence recognized the divine in human affairs." But still many states still forbid the teaching of the facts of the divine in public schools.

Yes, the Bible has become a Lost Book in educational institutions as well as in many homes in America. Tests show that many students are wholly ignorant of the character and content of this greatest of all literature. The leaders in other days in our Western world were steeped in Scriptures. In former generations men read and knew their Bibles, and at periods of crises such men gave leadership and guidance. Cromwell, Milton, Wilberforce, Washington, and Lincoln are only a few of the many that might be named. As leaders of other times received light and leading from *the Book*, so may modern youth, the leaders of tomorrow.

The American people do not want to cast aside religion. Too often have they experienced the

guiding hand of divine Providence to relinquish their belief in God and in the power for good which exists in the lessons of the Holy Bible setting forth the history of the Babe of Bethlehem. The founders of this nation cherished these ideals; it is our solemn duty to preserve and strengthen them. We fail in this duty when we do not find a practical solution to the problem of insuring freedom of conscience and at the same time giving to religion its rightful place in the life of *every* child. We want to keep the tolerance which now exists among us, but we do not want to let the fear of losing our religious balance bring about the destruction of religion.

The rapid current of modern life will carry our young people into irreligion and antireligion unless we show them in our educational systems that religion belongs to life, prepares for life, has real value and a genuine lesson even for this modern machine, movie, and radio age.

On many occasions, ministers of religion have delivered addresses to classes graduating at the close of the school year; sometimes these graduations have taken place in church edifices. Why must we then, lest we be accused of establishing a state religion, or preventing the

free exercise of religion, compel children to be educated without religion? The fruits of this widespread godless education are showing themselves in American life today.

Do not our public schools belong to religious people as well as to those who are irreligious, or even atheistic? Must we see the Ten Commandments and the virtues of honesty, truthfulness, and peace, which they teach, drop out of the realm of ordinary knowledge? The question really becomes important. There must be more religion, or shall we have more jails and prisons? Mental training without moral control may give first honor to men without honor!

Since the Bible has been banished from many of our educational systems, crime has increased 400 per cent. Many of our leading judges in recent years, when sentencing young criminals, have denounced our school system because it gave them no religious training. Judge Crapsey, of New York City, when sentencing four young boys to death for a cruel murder, uttered a fierce indictment against the schools because they did not provide religious training for the young. And he called upon the people to join him in a crusade to teach the young the worth-while

things of life. He said: "A dozen years on the bench have shown me that our boys can be saved *only* by religion." Judge Cram, one of New York's best-loved judges, a few years ago sent out a pamphlet calling for religious education, and arraigned in burning language our educational system because it excluded religious teaching. Is it not about time that we awakened to this defect in our educational system?

What has the human race done to Christ's teaching that includes every item of human behavior? It has woven into His basic teaching about human behavior the most intricate tangle of philosophy and metaphysics. It has divided the Christian world into sects and denominations, some of which have violently denied to others the right to call themselves true Christians! It has magnified the importance of certain words and theories about which Jesus Himself never uttered a word. Mankind has apparently not been willing to accept a religion so basic as the religion of Jesus, because it means doing the things He taught! It is because the whole definition of religion has been obscured and debased by all this doctrinal and formal treatment of it by theologians that the problem of introducing the teaching of

religion into an educational system has become a matter of debate and fierce argument, and refused to acknowledge the right of religious training except in the home and in the church. While it may be good statemanship to separate church and state, it is poor education to separate a human being from religion. And it is a pitiful fact that in this Christian republic of ours there are between 25,000,000 and 30,000,000 American children and youth under 25 years of age who are not enrolled in any Sunday school and receive no systematic religious instruction of any kind. In other words, approximately two-thirds of all youth in America are not enrolled in any religious schools, either on Sunday or weekday. As Gilbert K. Chesterton once said: "Christianity is not a failure; it has never been tried."

If religion can be taught, in the name of Him who came to give us life, and give it more abundantly, let us incorporate it into the very heart of our schools! He also said: "Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. 19. 14.)

If religion is theology, and doctrines, and creeds made over disputed definitions of God and theories of man's destiny, then as-

surely it can not be taught in our public schools. On the other hand, if religion is love of God and the brotherhood of man, it can be taught anywhere. And if it is not taught, our whole educational pyramid will continue to wobble on its pinnacle instead of resting firmly on its base!

"Is it right? \$200 a year for each man, woman, and child in America goes for luxuries; \$120 per person is spent to help pay the annual crime bill; 50 cents a person is given for religious purposes—only a very small fraction of this goes for religious education. May this throw some light on conditions in our beloved country today?" This is quoted from the March 1945 issue of *THE CHURCH SCHOOL TEACHER*, page 14.

In another challenging article in the same issue, titled "Fundamentals," we read as follows:

"The Christian Century commented recently on the report that keeps coming back from chaplains to the effect that the men who stand up best under the terrific strain of the Army or Navy are those who know the purpose of life and whose souls are undergirded by an abiding sense of God's willingness and power to help. *Those who lack faith and*

who perhaps never had any definite, dependable instruction in the Word of God are more likely to break under the strain."

I heard Chaplain Hjortland express substantially the same idea in a sermon delivered by him at Central Lutheran Church on Sunday, March 18, 1945.

"Dare we forget our own children?" asks Chaplain Gerhard Belgum.

"The Children's Charter" written by the White House Conference in 1930 under the sponsorship of the then President Herbert Hoover, placed the following as *first* in the order childhood's rights:

1. "For every child spiritual and moral training to help him to stand firm under the pressure of life."

The "White House Conference" in 1941 told us that half the school-age children of the nation were without religious instruction. "Open Bibles close jails and prisons."

Some years ago a prominent jurist was the attorney for a murderer. In his final address to the jury he said:

"Gentlemen of the jury! My

task is very easy. The accused has confessed; a defense is impossible, and yet I want to add a few words. There on the wall of this court room, I see the picture of the crucified Christ and I pay homage to Him. There hangs the picture, in this hall of justice, where you condemn the guilty. *But why do we not hear anything of Him in our public schools to which we send our children? Why does this murderer, for the first time in his life, see the crucified One here in this hall, where the law will punish him? If the attention of my client had been directed to the crucified One when he sat on the benches of the school, he would not now sit here facing disgrace, infamy, and death. Yes, it is you, gentlemen, whom I accuse. You that brag, with your education and your culture, and yet are barbarous; who spread atheism and lust among the young people, and then are astonished when the young people reply with crime and vulgarity. Condemn my client, gentlemen: you have the right to do it; but I accuse YOU—that is my DUTY! The defense rests its case."*

Finding the Essence of Christmas Joy

By M. LOUISE C. HASTINGS

WITH the world so full of confusion and trouble, we must work harder than ever to help the children in our homes and the pupils in our church schools to realize the true meaning of Christmas. We must think more and do more to make the season real to everybody. We must do little kindnesses where we have never done them before, and try to brighten those homes that never before have needed us. And we shall need to use the minimum amount of money this year except where there is great need, and that will take a considerable amount of planning.

The essence of Christmas joy is service to others. The more we do for those we love, for those we contact day after day, week after week, and even for those we do not know, the happier life will be on all sides. We learn the joy of doing when we forget self. This is the spirit of Christmas which we parents and teachers wish the children under our care to know.

Following are inexpensive ways

and means of making Christmas bright and cheerful for old and young. These suggestions are given with the home in mind as well as the church school. With good leadership in both places, much happiness will be forthcoming for those who give and for those who receive.

Evergreen Balls

Always trips to the woods and fields with parents or teachers are interesting experiences. Gathering evergreen cones and twigs to use for Christmas gifts makes interesting work, and nature is glad to give of her bountiful store. For these evergreen balls, cut a circle of burlap, green if available, and run a string all around the edge to draw it up. Fill this bag with damp peat moss and sew it together. Then stick twigs of different kinds of evergreen into the ball in every direction, completely covering the ball if possible. Fasten the twigs into the burlap with silkateen so they will not fall out. This is an easy gift to make and

will be something different. Fasten on a ribbon loop to hang it by.

Boxes of Evergreens

It is a good plan if possible to make many gifts from nature's outdoor laboratory. Many a shut-in is glad to receive the spicy odors from the woods. A two-pound candy box filled with moss and lichens, some pieces of evergreens and perhaps a branch of red alder berries, will not seem much, perhaps, but it really is a joy to receive such a box. Sprays of evergreens may not be as colorful to come in a florist's box as roses, but they make an unusual gift and I know from experience that they are most welcome, especially to those people who can not get into the woods themselves.

If there are no woods, go to the fields and pick the stiff weed heads and seed pods. Winter bouquets are very popular. Paint the milkweed pods silver or black with gay colors inside and use two or three stalks to a bouquet. These, too, are beautiful enough to be presented in a florist's box. We do not realize some of nature's beauty until we start using it.

Popcorn Balls

Baskets of popcorn balls all wrapped up in pretty cellophane

will prove welcome. A special kind of ball may be made by putting a gift of some kind in the center of each one, each inside gift being wrapped in wax paper so the corn will not make it sticky. These inside gifts might vary in kind. Some might be candy, some might be small cookies, or a cupcake prettily frosted, or even something not in the cooking line.

Wooden Gifts

Boys who like to use their jackknives can make all sorts of interesting and inexpensive gifts. Any one who has a garden will welcome plant stakes or smaller stakes for flower pots on the window sill. These may be just bundles of plain strips made from the wood of an orange or grapefruit crate from the grocer's, and then gaily painted. Or more venturesome boys will like heavier wood and will enjoy cutting out figures of birds, flowers and other shapes for the tops of the strips.

Perseverance with jackknives may produce little figures to be used in planning out little manger scenes. These are not only appropriate but will symbolize the Christmas story on the Judean hills.

Larger work using hammer and nails might consist of bird feeding

houses or wooden shelves to be fastened outside the window of some person who would enjoy watching the birds feeding. Or with less need for perfect work, some boys would be able to dig out holes in wood from the woodpile and fill them with melted suet for the chickadees. Branches of trees that have broken off, about ten inches in length, might be "holed" and filled with melted suet. Hang these pieces of wood and broken branches on trees or in front of windows. It is interesting to watch the fun the birds will have eating their meals from them. Whatever is prepared for the birds should be out of reach of the cats.

Making Vases

Girls will have fun decorating bottles and jars of all kinds and sizes for gifts as vases. This may be done in a variety of ways. It is a good project for a whole class of girls to undertake. The easiest method is to cut out pictures of flowers, birds or designs, and paste them on the bottle or jar, and then shellac each one. This is very simple.

Drip vases are interesting to make. Collect odds and ends of paint from each home in the class and from neighbors. Then with

aprons and gloves, paint, bottles and jars, and plenty of newspapers on the tables, paint them. When the paint is dry, or sometimes when the paint is still wet, dip another brush into paint of another tone or color and squeeze it along the rim of the vase. The paint will run down all over the vase. When dry these will be very artistic. After experimenting a little, the girls will become quite expert in the work of dripping. It is fascinating work and the same idea may be carried out with tin cans of different sizes.

There is something personal with gifts of this kind. Let us impress upon the children of any age that when they are giving time and effort like this they are really sharing Christmas with those who receive their productions. Another way of dressing up these odd bottles, jars and cans is the stencil method. Fasten a small stencil design to the bottle and paint the stencil on the bottle, or apply the color with a spray. When dry they can be shellacked.

Making Precious Memories

We are concerned that our boys and girls should learn the loveliness of doing for others. Year after year doing for others at Christmas time instills into their hearts

the joy of continuing throughout the year. It becomes second habit to forget self and try to make others happy. There is another side to all this working and planning together. It is making precious memories for the boys and girls themselves. In later years when conditions have separated the

crowd these memories carry over many a difficult place in life. It is always good to look back when the memories are rich and choice. In the home and in the church school this far-off result should always be behind all service. Let us plan such ways of working that the memories will always be a joy!

Christian Foundations for World Order

By RICHARD M. FAGLEY

DURING the past two years the United Nations have made an important beginning on the long road to world organization. They have agreed in a series of conferences to set up international agencies for regular consultation and co-operation on political and economic threats to peace. Out of the suffering and sacrifice of the world's ordeal has come a new effort to organize the interdependence of man. Whether this effort will fulfill the hopes and prayers of the plain people everywhere for

freedom from fear remains to be seen. But at least a start has been made. The peace machinery has been planned and set in motion.

The churches have made important contributions to this initial achievement. Through the educational work based on the *Six Pillars of Peace* and the *Pattern for Peace*, through the successful denominational campaign to mobilize church opinion, through the united program developed at the Cleveland Conference, the churches have helped to shape an American policy for international collaboration. Millions of church people have ac-

* This article was made available through the International Council of Religious Education.

cepted the responsibilities of Christian citizenship in a constructive way, at a time of world-wide decision.

The accomplishments of the period past, however, leave no room for self-satisfaction. The beginning of international organization, essential as it is, is still but a beginning. Whether the peace machinery will become more adequate to meet the needs of international life, whether it will develop in the direction of Christian ideals, remains to be determined. Indeed, it is still uncertain whether the machinery as it stands will be used to the full. The best machinery, much less the imperfect mechanisms now established, will not work unless the governments and peoples of the world have the will to make it work. There is no substitute for constant effort in the struggle to organize a just and stable peace.

This means that Christians will need to think and act in terms of concrete, imperfect choices in the months and years ahead—as in the past. We will no doubt witness many unilateral acts to achieve national security, whatever progress is made toward co-operative action for collective security. This contradictory process reflects both the fear of a third world war and the great powers' fear of each other.

The latter may destroy the institutions of peace, unless an informed and insistent public opinion supports the co-operative approach to international problems. Time after time we will be faced with forks in the road of world order, leading through joint efforts to an uncertain future or through separate action to sure catastrophe. The need to choose between "gray" and "black" recognized so clearly at the Cleveland Conference, will remain in the period ahead.

The work to improve the international organization step by step in the light of experience and new insights is not, however, an adequate Christian program for world order. More is needed than efforts to help international co-operation to survive succeeding crises. More is needed than the fear of a new and more terrible world war. We in the churches can not be content merely with improvised short-term strategies. The Christian conscience demands an adequate long-term strategy as well. We seek not only to prevent the collapse of civilization. We seek a new and better society of men.

It is faith rather than fear that is the predominant concern and contribution of the Christian churches. As the delegate at Cleveland said, "Our confidence is in

God, the establisher of the order within which men and nations work."

"We believe in the might of truth as against falsehood. . . . We believe in the power of good will as greater than selfishness and force: In the value of mutual trust as against distrust and suspicion; and in the might of faith as greater than cynicism, doubt and despair."

This faith in the possibility of a better world order under God is the basic contribution of Christians to the great social problem of our time. It is the foundation on which the churches, on which the nations need to build, if the structure of peace is to stand. "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it."

The short-term efforts to prevent a third world war can give men time to lay firm spiritual foundations of world order. Let us make sure that the opportunity afforded by these efforts is not wasted. Let us undertake the lifetime job, the slow, undramatic and yet tremendous task of building the moral and religious undergirding for a better world. The Cleveland Message suggested some of the first steps.

1. *Christian Relief and Reconstruction.* Helping to meet the needs of suffering people in areas

devastated by the war is a Christian and not only a humanitarian obligation. Failure to meet these fearful material and spiritual needs through energetic and generous efforts would poison the wellsprings of international co-operation. If we would build a brighter future for the world and for ourselves, we need to intensify the work to help the war-ravaged peoples to re-establish their uprooted lives. The program must be a total program, to meet the material, intellectual and spiritual needs of those who have endured the terrible storms of modern war. We need to reinforce greatly basic welfare relief, an adequate program of economic reconstruction, and above all, our church agencies for Christian reconstruction.

2. *Christian Education.* Training for Christian citizenship in an interdependent world is a major obligation. More adequate educational materials for parents and teachers need to be prepared, if children are to develop "attitudes and ways of behaving essential for Christian world citizenship." If the minds of men are to grasp the implications of the present air age, a clearer understanding of our interdependence must become a habit from earliest childhood. Every family, every teacher, has a chance

to help build the world of tomorrow. Young people need to be given more responsible tasks in the world-order program of the churches. Special efforts to enlist the active participation of returning veterans in this program need to be made.

3. *Christian Unity*. A far higher degree of unity within Protestantism at home and throughout the world is indispensable, if the potential resources of the churches

are to be used fully in providing a moral climate in which international organization can live and grow. The co-operation of the churches can lead the way for the co-operation of the nations.

In the months ahead, let us look to the Christian foundations of world order, that the structure of peace may endure. The San Francisco Charter can be a great help if it is adequately supported.

No One Has Told Us

The most vivid picture that remains from Bishop Azariah's last days is of a walk at sunset. A young herdsman was returning across the fields of stubble from his day's toil.

"What did you do about your food today?" the Bishop called out.

"I had a little with me," the lad replied.

"Are you a Christian?"

"No."

"Aren't there any Christians in your village?"

"No."

All the missionary in the Bishop sprang into action. He strode across the fields to the lad, erect and vigorous, walking stick gripped firmly. "No Christians there?"

The boy stood his ground without fear. "No," he said simply. "No one has told us."

"*No one has told us!*" The Bishop returned meditatively. "How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent?"

ELEANOR MASON, Women's Christian College of Madras.

At Christmastide

By HORTENSE HAGE STORVICK

WILL we Lutheran teachers *take time* to let the glorious angels' song penetrate our thinking and living during busy days? To the already full life of daily work and home responsibilities, we Sunday-school workers add the duties and joys of our holy task of class teaching or administration. Lest any of us miss the deep peace of Christmas, let us put this reminding poem of Grace Noll Crowell up on our desk or dressing table:

LEISURE

I shall attend to my little errands of love early, this year,
 So that the brief days before Christmas may be
 Unhampered and clear
 Of the fever of hurry. The breathless rushing that I
 Have known in the past
 Shall not possess me. I shall be calm in my soul
 And ready at last
 For Christmas: "The Mass of the Christ," I shall kneel
 And call out His name;
 I shall take time to watch the beautiful light
 Of a candle's flame;
 I shall have leisure, I shall go out alone
 From my roof and my door;
 I shall not miss the silver silence of stars
 As I have before;
 And, oh, perhaps, if I stand there very still,
 And very long,
 I shall hear what the clamor of living has kept from me:
 The angels' song.

GRACE NOLL CROWELL.

"*Fear not: for, behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people . . .* on earth peace, good will toward men."
 Glory to God in the highest, and First of all, let us draw out from our pupils' thinking their con-

cepts of the great words "*Fear not — good tidings — great joy — all people — Glory to God — peace, good will.*" We can guide them to think through the meaning of the angels' song for their own personal lives:

"*Fear not.*" While it is human to fear, God's bidding us "fear not" means that Christ came to give us the power to overcome fear.

"*Good tidings — great joy.*" Know for sure that God wants us to be happy. The only source of true and lasting joy lies in the personal acceptance of the great Christmas Gift, Christ in our hearts, forgiveness of all sin, daily cleansing and guidance and strength. No true Christian should be long-faced, dreary, and gloomy, because "earth has no sorrow that heaven can not heal."

"*All people.*" The great Christmas Gift is ours for personal salvation and joy, but He must be given to others through us until *all* people everywhere have heard the glad tidings. This gives an excellent opportunity to emphasize neighborhood, national and foreign mission needs.

"*Glory to God.*" Is my life glorifying God? Am I giving Him the glory for my talents or am I using them as though I had cre-

ated them in myself? Am I giving God the glory as I use my time and money?

"*Peace, good will.*" How does this affect my feelings toward the Negro, the Jew, the Jap? What lies at the root of the many strikes today? If I want to see peace and good will on earth, I will first have to see to it that it is in my own heart. Do my attitudes and actions in school and in play and in church activities promote peace and good will. "Ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, *that ye may show forth the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.*"

Then let us be sure that our pupils have the angels' song memorized for keeps, not as an assignment or chore, but by happy, unconscious contagion. Write the glorious words across the top of our blackboard, or better still, have one of our pupils, or his dad, if our Johnnies and Marys are younger, print them attractively on a large piece of cardboard to be hung in a conspicuous place in our class nook during December.

Memories that Count

Thinking back over our own Christmas experiences in church

will prove one of the most profitable ways of improving our present Christmas plans. The strong points we would emulate, the weaknesses avoid.

Remember the "Christmas Tree Program"? The breathlessly eager arrival at church, strains of "Silent Night," fragrance of pine, shining tinsel and stars, the expectant hush, joyful singing of familiar carols, dialogs and recitations, *your* part at last! The "around the altar" offering, the Christmas treat of an apple or orange and a bright box of candy, the Christ child so very real!

Let us pray for a special measure of grace in doing our part to help make the Sunday school's Christmas festivities for our 1945 children as sweetly and solemnly joyous as ours were.

Evaluating the Worth of the Program Planned

1. Does every pupil feel that he has a part? Even though Dick's only part is to sing in the chorus, he can realize that it is important.
2. Is our program encouraging the appreciation and memorizing of our great Christmas hymns?
3. Is the Christmas Gospel being memorized?
4. Will the audience be given the message of Christmas?

An Opportunity Frequently "Muffed"

Who of us teachers has not gone home from a so-called Sunday-school Christmas program with a heavy heart because "Isn't she cute!" or "How darling!" remarks had been more in evidence during the performance than glad reverence for the "good tidings of great joy to all people."

Why is the glorious opportunity of the Christmas program by the Sunday school so often muffed? Usually because too little real prayer and effort went into its planning. A program hastily and tardily decided upon does not bless many people.

These are the pre-Christmas days during which we Lutheran teachers should be praying and working to make the holy-day festivities as full of blessing as they ought to be.

No Class Today

Fortunate are the Sunday schools whose Christmas program committee has carefully worked out the schedule of rehearsals so that regular classwork is interrupted as little as possible. Only once, or better still not at all, is the announcement made, "No classes today." The most effective memorization of our glorious

Christmas hymns is done in the class group, guided and inspired by the teacher. Thus the large rehearsals consume less time, and results are far more satisfactory.

*Do They Know that Advent
Is Here?*

Are our pupils conscious of the fact that we are now in the blessed Advent season? Helping them to become familiar with our Church year will increase their interest in Sunday sermons and enrich their worship. We can encourage them to read Luke during Advent, as well as fine biographies of Christ.

"Growing Up" Classes

The art of deepening Christmas appreciation and participation among adolescents is difficult but worth every bit of effort entailed. "Kid stuff!" is written on the faces of some who might not go so far as to make vocal their boredom. Skill in enlisting their interested co-operation is the privilege of their teacher. Giving them responsibility for "the best" section of the Christmas program, using them as ushers or marshals of younger groups, discussing Christmas worship preparation in class, all are infinitely better than having them sit idly through too many rehearsals, watching the "young kids."

Successful use of the following approach in a class discussion of Christmas preparation is reported by one teacher:

1. What was your first inner reaction when you saw the shopping district decked for Christmas? Usually the responses will include something indicating happiness and joy.

2. Have you ever stopped to realize why almost everyone feels happy at Christmas, even those who can scarcely be called Christians? Elicit the response that almost everyone takes the time and trouble to express love for others.

3. Who are the ones who do not feel happy at Christmas? Those who are dissatisfied because they think others are not doing enough for them. Also those whose gifts to others are given only because "it's expected."

4. Mention other times in your life when you have experienced the same kind of happiness as you enjoy at Christmas. When I saved to give Mother the pretty pin she admired. When I read stories to the blind boy at the hospital.

5. Do these facts show us anything about ourselves and the way we were meant to live? That we are happiest when we feel and express love for others. We were meant to live in Christian love.

*Two of Yuletide's Many
Opportunities*

Memorizing Christmas Hymns.

No pupil in our Sunday schools should be cheated of the life enrichment inherent in having our beautiful Christmas carols sung so frequently that they are his for keeps without his having made a conscious effort to memorize them.

Greeting Parents at the Sunday School's Christmas Program. Some parents come to the Christmas festival only because their Helen or Peter is on the program. Capitalizing on this opportunity, the alert teacher will make it a point to say, "Will you please ask your mother and dad to wait after the program so I can greet them?" Introducing them to a pair or two of the congregation's staunchest friendly Christian parents may be a stepping stone toward making Helen's or Peter's mother and dad feel that they would like to affiliate with the church.

Using Our College Students

Very soon there will be returning to their home communities for the holidays those young people fortunate enough to be securing a college or university education. They wear a halo in the eyes of of the younger adolescents back home, whether they deserve it or

not. Hence their testimony for Christ is doubly significant.

Why not make this fact count in our Sunday-school class? Invite one of these fine young college students to speak briefly at the junior worship service or Sunday-school opening service.

If ours is a primary class, perhaps we can ask a college student to assist us during the preparation and rendition of the Christmas program numbers.

The richest field for the Christian witness of college students is undoubtedly our high school Bible class department. Collegiate Carl's honest enthusiasm for the Kingdom's great interests may mean that brilliant young high school sophomore Freddie will commence to dream of attending one of our church colleges. Or that attractive, sought-after Helen will take her Luther League responsibilities more seriously. Or that steady, quiet Bob will be encouraged to speak up for Christ.

New Year's Eve for Christ

"Oh, we have our own New Year's Eve party at home," said a good church member when another good church member asked why she was not at the congregation's festivity. Though God certainly grants His people the

privilege of greeting the New Year with family and friends at home, there is need of interested support from our finest Christians in building a tradition of being in God's house with God's people on New Year's Eve, particularly for the sake of our young people.

Every red-blooded American adolescent wants to go to a party on New Year's Eve. Everybody is going someplace, and our young folk want to go, too. "What are you doing New Year's Eve?" is the common holiday question. One of our responsibilities as Lutheran teachers is to help make it possible for our congregations' young people to answer, "We're having a swell party and worship service at our church. I'm going there, our whole family is." Yes, we want to make it more than possible for our youth to give that answer, we want to do our part to make them *choose* to do so, to make it the thing to do, because all their gang is going, too.

Many fine people have complications about having anything but religious services in their church building. Certainly they have a right to their convictions. Let those, then, open their homes on New Year's Eve for a Christian youth party.

Would our Lord express disap-

proval of His people's gathering in the church parlors for a happy, clean good time on a festive holiday night before going up to the sanctuary to thank Him for blessings past and to ask His presence throughout the opening year?

This is the basic pattern of New Year's Eve festivities found effective in a number of congregations:

1. Gathering informally in the church parlors. Table games enjoyed until all are present.

2. In large congregations a formal worship service at nine o'clock for all, and particularly for those who do not care to stay up until midnight.

3. Table games, group games, entertaining program numbers, and refreshments.

4. At eleven-thirty hymnals are distributed and all march up to the sanctuary singing, "O Come, All Ye Faithful," or some other appropriate hymn.

5. Worship service conducted by the young people of the congregation. In congregations having young people at colleges or universities and home for the holidays, those students are in charge. This is one of the finest ways of encouraging Christian higher education and also of making students know they are wanted and needed in their home congregation.

Home Education

Issued by the National Kindergarten Association

Helping with the Business

By JANETTE S. MURRAY

NOVAK does a first rate job in resoling," said the kindergarten teacher in reply to my query about a cobbler. "His little Anton is in my room, you know."

The next morning I took my "oxfords" to Novak's shop just around the corner from Main Street. The door was locked. I knocked and a neat aproned woman came out of a house near by.

She arranged for my work, then said, "Your shoes will be ready at four o'clock."

Walking down the street after school, I saw two children playing in front of the cobbler's shop. They evidently recognized me as the customer of the morning—although I had not seen them then—for immediately, the little girl ran to the back yard calling, "Daddy, come!"

The shoemaker and his wife were building a back fence.

Anton followed his sister, but seeing that his father had been con-

tacted, the boy ran back to me. "It's a nice day, isn't it?" he said. There was a friendly smile in his dark eyes. Then pointing down the hill, he added, "It's fun playing in the ditch when it rains—we have a dam."

My heart warmed to Anton. He was entertaining me until someone came.

"Yes, even Rosie helps," said Mrs. Novak as she wrapped my shoes. Then she tied the red ribbon on one of the child's brown braids and gave her a reassuring pat. Rosie slipped from behind her mother's screening apron, smiled at me and ran out doors.

"She is shy; Anton was like that, too, but he soon forgot about himself after he thought out the idea of finding his father for the customers. You see, there is not enough shoe-repairing business here, so my husband works in the garden or mends furniture in the basement. When I help him, the children must watch for the customers."

"But don't they forget and wander away?"

"No, they're proud to help with

their father's business. Really, it is the family business; we all work." Mrs. Novak painstakingly counted out my change.

"Isn't it quite difficult for you, Mrs. Novak?"

"No, we made some business rules—they help. Anton printed them on a card."

"I'd like to see them, so I can tell other mothers."

"Why yes, but they're tacked up on the wall. Come over to the house."

Mrs. Novak led me into the neat kitchen. A fuchsia with drooping red blossoms stood on the window sill.

"Anton only learned to print this year." His mother pointed with pride to a large cardboard tacked low on the wall.

These were the rules:

1. Be polite to the people in the shop and everywhere.
2. Try to help our customers so they will be satisfied.
3. Smile and be friendly.
4. In the morning, Anton and Rosie must have their faces washed and hair combed before going out.
5. Put everything back in its place after using.
6. Hang coats and caps on hooks and place rubbers underneath.

7. Help to keep the shop, house, and yard, clean and neat.

These seemed like practical and good rules; we discussed them, and then I turned to go.

Mrs. Novak followed me to the door. "Thank you for the work. My husband will be glad to fix your shoes again."

I had been well served and would return. As I walked up the hill, I thought over what I'd seen. Anton and little Rosie were getting practice early in being neat and businesslike and were learning how to meet people. Here, also, was family solidarity, mutual responsibility, fine co-operation, and the right attitudes.

The Man in the Barn

By HILDA RICHMOND

JOHNNY, will you please run out to the barn and get me my yardstick?" called Grandmother Ward. "You will probably find it by the oats bin, where Uncle James was using it yesterday."

"I don't want to go, Grandmother" said Johnny Morse.

"Don't want to go? Don't want to do a little errand for Grandmother? What is the matter?"

"I'm afraid—afraid of the man

in the barn." There was a frightened look in the little boy's eyes.

"Man in the barn?" said Aunt Nellie. "There's no man in our barn!"

"Yes, there is, Aunt Nellie,—a tramp man," persisted the little boy. "I saw him."

Grandmother and Aunt Nellie exchanged glances that plainly showed their thoughts, but they did not argue the matter further.

"Perhaps old Mr. Burton was in the barn looking for a tool," said Grandmother. "He wears such old clothes when he is at work,—it is possible Johnny saw *him*."

"A plain case of imagination," was Aunt Nellie's opinion. A little later she said, "I think Johnny didn't want to go out to the barn and so invented that story. His mother should be told about it, so that, if that is what happened, she can correct him for fabricating such tales."

When Johnny's mother returned, Aunt Nellie told her of the incident. Mrs. Morse then asked Johnny when it was he saw the man in the barn and where he saw him. The little boy stoutly stuck to his first story, and, moreover, he said he did not want his mother to go into the barn.

"You know, Mother, you told me never to stop to speak to tramp

men, and I don't want you to go out to the barn either. Here comes Billie to play with me. He saw the tramp man, too. The man *lives* in the barn."

Billie, the neighbor's son, added his testimony. "He was a big, tall man, and he wore old clothes," he said. In answer to their questions, he told them that the man did not speak to them but that they were much frightened. He was not a neighbor, the boy was sure, for he knew all the neighbors. Johnny, of course, did not know them for he was a visitor.

Just then the first load of new hay was brought from the meadow, and Grandfather flung the big barn doors wide open. Johnny's mother took the little boys by the hand and said, "Now we shall go to see the old man."

The boys hung back plainly frightened, particularly when a big cloud of dust arose from the hay mow. "There he is," cried Johnny, pointing to the hay mow.

Johnny's mother did not laugh, though it was funny.

"That's my scarecrow," said Grandfather. "It's hard to make a scarecrow each summer, so I thought I would save mine through the winter."

Sure enough! The old scarecrow stood tall and straight in the

middle of the empty mow with a pipe in the corner of his mouth, a battered hat of Grandfather's on his head, his trouser legs stuffed with straw, and his coat pockets bulging. He certainly was not a good-looking *man*, and his whisks blowing almost over his head in the summer breeze did not improve his looks. Grandfather carefully lowered the "tramp man," and then they all went out to set him up in the strawberry patch to scare the birds away.

In the house Grandmother was watching from a window. "Nellie," she said, "isn't Molly a wise mother? She never intimated that the boys might be mistaken, nor did she force them to go into the barn, nor laugh at their fright."

"Yes, she is a good mother," answered Aunt Nellie. "I'm sorry I didn't believe Johnny's story. I'm going to make a deep custard pie for him and tell him he may invite Billie to dinner. And in the future, I shall try to give my children the benefit of every doubt."

As Aunt Nellie's youngest child was not yet three months old and her eldest was only two years old, Grandmother smiled, but she said, "It's never too early to begin doing that," and Aunt Nellie agreed.

That Four-lettered Word

By FRANCES D. HERON

COME HERE to Mother, you darling!" Marian Graham held out her arms, and two-year-old Frankie climbed upon her lap to be fondled and rocked.

Marian's Aunt Celia regarded the scene with amusement, recalling the past.

"Aren't you the same mother who didn't rock babies or fuss over them?" she asked laughingly.

"The very same," replied Marian. "I was almost austere with Dotty and Jim, wasn't I?"

"Everything by the clock—no holding, no rocking, no picking them up when they cried. You weren't going to spoil your babies, nor were you going to let your Aunt Celia spoil them when she visited you!"

Marian kissed Frankie's curly head. "I still think it's important for babies and older children to eat and sleep and do other things on schedule. But I decided loving them was also important."

"You don't mean," asked Aunt Celia, "that you didn't love Jim and Dotty as much as you do Frankie?"

"Of course I did, but I'm afraid

I was so busy with schedules and child psychology I didn't show it. In fact, some child psychologists were saying then that you shouldn't be demonstrative with your children—that it caused some kind of complex. They said you shouldn't sympathize when your child tumbled down and hurt his knee, for fear of making him *soft*.

"Fortunately, Jim's and Dotty's daddy didn't pay much attention to such ideas, and he'd be so glad to see the children when he came home from work that he'd romp with them. One day I realized they seemed to enjoy their daddy a lot more than they did me—in fact to *like* him better. Then I knew I was making the same mistake my mother had made—only for a different reason. I wasn't telling them nor showing them that I loved them."

Aunt Celia nodded. "Your mother wasn't the demonstrative type."

Marian smiled. "I think it sprang from that stern New England ancestry she was so proud of. Anyway, she made little show of affection even to her children. The first time I remember her kissing me was when, at fifteen, I went on a trip. I do recall, though, when I was eight or ten asking, 'Did you ever kiss me, Mother?' and she said, 'Oh, yes, when you

were a baby!' I would have given anything if she had kissed me then.

"There were times when deep in my heart I used to wonder, 'Does my mother really love me?' Mother would have been amazed. She assumed children should know that of course their parents loved them. She worked early and late making our clothes, cooking, washing, and ironing for us. I didn't appreciate it when I was small, but when I was grown I valued all that she had done. Children take those things for granted, as their right—they don't see the love back of them unless it is expressed in words. If only my mother had been just a little demonstrative at times—had let me know that she loved me!"

Aunt Celia nodded. "I suppose many of us had the same experience. I'm glad your children are profiting by yours."

"Oh, yes. Jim is getting too big for lap-holding, but he still likes good-night kisses. And the other day, when Frankie pinched his finger in the door, Dotty kissed him, and called, 'It's all right, Mother. I put some love on it.'"

Aunt Celia smiled and said, "Well, we could certainly use a lot more love in the world, and we should start supplying our own families."

Activities in the Field of Christian Education

By I. O. NOTHSTEIN

High School Bible Department.

In the congregation served by the Rev. O. G. Birkeland the Sunday school has for the past fourteen years featured what is called the High School Bible Department, and 182 persons have during this period completed the prescribed four-year course of study.

Speaking of the work in *The Lutheran Herald*, Pastor Birkeland writes: "The benefits of such a department in a congregation can hardly be overestimated. It bridges over the critical years of the high school age and is one of the very powerful agencies, not only in holding its members for Christ, but in making them active members of the church. The leaders and workers in the Luther Leagues, the choirs, and other youth organizations and branches of work in the congregation are usually from this department or from its list of graduates. As a rule, this group of young people is also most regular at divine worship and the Lord's Table.

"The influence which this department exerts is therefore also significant. . . . It encourages better attendance at both the Sunday school and the church service. In general, it stimulates among the young people of the congregation a more intelligent and active interest in all the activities of the church."

* * *

More Sunday School Work on the Radio. For the purpose of bringing religious education by radio to children of junior church school age, forty-eight transcriptions, divided into four series of twelve programs each, are being developed by the Joint Radio Committee of the Congregational, Christian, Methodist, and Presbyterian U. S. A. Churches.

The first series, now ready for distribution, is entitled: "All Aboard for Adventure," and deals with the exploits of Christian missionaries and Christian natives in the Pacific war areas. The second series will deal with home mis-

sions, the third with the Bible around the world, the fourth with adventure stories from the Bible.

The programs have been planned with three devices to catch and hold the interest of children. Each broadcast opens with a five-minute dramatization of an adventure story, which is followed by a discussion in which three junior-age children participate under the leadership of the Rev. James Flint, who is known as "Skipper Jim of the Adventure Special."

Each child listening to the program is invited to write in for a free copy of the Adventure Log, a volume containing background material and pictures about the incidents treated on the air. It is similar to the material used in church school classes.

* * *

"*Ambassadors for Christ.*" The Parish and Church School Board of the United Lutheran Church is suggesting a plan to the Sunday schools for using present pupils to win back those who may have dropped out, to prevent irregularity in attendance on the part of those now enrolled, and to enlist new pupils. The plan is not based on theory but upon the successful experience of one congregation whose pastor helped develop it. The Board has prepared mimeo-

graphed instructions telling how to carry out the program. They include an appropriate introduction, advice as to proper preparation for the program, suggestions for an installation service, instructions to be given the ambassadors, and other pertinent information.

* * *

Minister of Music and Education. Miss Mary Elizabeth Fowler has been called as full-time Minister of Music and Religious Education by the First Lutheran Church (U. L. C.) of Johnstown, Pa. She has occupied a similar position in Holy Trinity Lutheran Church (U. L. C.) of New Rochelle, N. Y.

* * *

Real Devotion. Mr. Fred Bohlig, a prominent Lutheran layman of New York City, has completed forty-two years as superintendent of his Sunday school, Our Saviour's (U. L. C.). The Hon. Benjamin Apple, another prominent Lutheran layman, educator, publisher, state senator and manufacturer of Sunbury, Pa., taught an adult class in his church school (U. L. C.) for fifty-two years, until the time of his recent death.

* * *

Sunday School Busses. St. Peter's Lutheran Church (American Luth.) of Colgate, Baltimore,

Md., which has for several years operated a bus to gather distant Sunday school pupils, has added another bus to its equipment.

* * *

Lutheran High Schools. A Lutheran High School Association, begun by the churches of the Missouri Synod in Detroit, is making efforts to enlist all the Lutheran congregations in the city in the enterprise. The association has so far made a 120 per cent gain in membership over 1944.

* * *

Older Than American Sunday Schools. That religious education of the youth is nothing new in the Lutheran Church is again illustrated by the recent celebration conducted by the Salem Lutheran Church (U. L. C.) of Lebanon, Pa., in commemoration of the 200th anniversary of the organization of its Christian day school. It came into existence before there were any public schools in the state, at a time when each church also provided for the education of its children in the "three r's" as well as in religion.

* * *

"The Sunday School of the Future," says *The American Lutheran*, "can not remain the stepchild of the church and hope to prosper. If a congregation expects the Sun-

day school to be self-supporting and places full responsibility for developing and carrying out the program upon a busy pastor, or a layman who has not specialized in education, such a congregation should not expect to reap where it has not sown. We often find a lack of sacrifice for education in the local congregation. People will more readily spend money for beautifying the church services for their own gratification than to invest money in the Christian education of their children."

Bible Reading in the Public Schools

Back in the days of the thirteen original colonies wherever there was a church there was a school. And everywhere the chief textbook of the schools was the Bible. It is plain history to say that our public-school systems originated as Bible schools.

In the public schools of America today the reading of the Bible is a matter on which each of the 48 states makes its own ruling.

The American Bible Society, in a recent survey, finds that Bible reading in the public schools is required in 11 states, prohibited by 4 states and in the remaining 33 permitted though not required.

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For the Christmas Program

Our New Sunday School Christmas Service Uses Both Eye-gate and
Ear-gate in Bringing Its Message

CHRIST COMES

Arranged by RUTH YOUNGDAHL NELSON

Christ Comes is a Christmas Service with a definite message, well developed, and with instant appeal. It has three parts: Christ Comes to Bethlehem, Christ Comes Today, and Christ Is Coming Again. Several avenues of Christ's coming are noted that are less familiar in Christmas programs, but which this service demonstrates as most fittingly belonging there.

This service makes use of both eye-gate and ear-gate in carrying its message to the congregation. There is an important visual part, which is simple and easy to arrange. It consists of eight tableaux, around which the numbers spoken and sung are naturally and effectively grouped. In Part I, the usual Nativity and adoration scenes occur. In Part II there are tableaux representing the sacraments, the home altar, and Christian service. The scene of the Wise Virgins is presented in connection with Part III. The instructions accompanying these simple scenes are clear and practical.

A Speaking Choir reads the Scripture passages that go with the tableaux. This is a fine project for the Bible Class department. Nothing elaborate is suggested, but merely such clear reading, in unison or individual voice, as will make the Scripture selections surely heard.

The arranger has selected singable songs that are appropriate and appealing, and added several new songs, one of them a beautiful number occurring here for the first time in a published program. It is entitled "In Bethlehem." The recitations, too, are of excellent choice, some quite unusual.

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